A Mother's Song

BY MARY D. BRINE

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A MOTHER'S SONG

BY

MARY D. BRINE

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TO OUR FRIEND

MRS. GEORGE ROLAND.

I am sitting at my window ; oh, the world is passing fair
As I look at it this morning
In its new, spring-tide adorning,
And watch a sun-framed picture as I breathe the scented air
Which from daisied fields is drifting
Under smiling skies above,
Now and then the soft curls lifting
On a little brow I love.

From the tree-top sings the robin in the orchard near at hand.
Where 'neath boughs all blossom-laden
My winsome blue-eyed maiden,
With her dimpled face uplifted to the blossoms likes to stand,
While the pink and white spring treasures
Spread their dainty shimmering sheen
My little love's bright beauty
And the tender skies between.

Is she watching for the fairies which, we told her, come
with spring
To set the trees a-glowing
With the pretty blossoms blowing,
And to teach the robin red-breast his sweet songs to
sing?
Ah, the robin can not tell her
Where the fairies may have flown,
But he knows no sweeter blossom
Blooms—than that I call my own.

Not long since from this same window I gazed on fields
of snow,
Where the barren trees bore only
On their tossing limbs so lonely—
The memory of a beauty, winter-banished long ago.
E'en my heart was chilled and dreary ;
I was worn with wild unrest,
All so languid and so weary
Lay the blossom on my breast—

Which a glad spring-time had brought me from a land most fair and sweet.

As I longed, with arms upreaching,

For the gentle, holy teaching

Learned by clasping baby fingers, and by guiding baby feet.

But the winter winds were cruel,

And my blossom was so frail,

And when came the white, white snow-drifts,

Baby's cheek grew wan and pale.

Sweetest songs, they say, are surely those which hold a
minor key.
And no life is perfect ever—
So say wise men—which is never
Touched by sorrow's cloud whatever the fair morning's
promise be.
So I pondered in my grieving,
As the weary days went by,
Till the first blue violet wakened
Underneath a spring-tide sky.

Then I knew the rod uplifted o'er my drooping head so long
Had been lowered, and confessing
All the wondrous love and blessing,
With the earth's new jubilate all my heart broke out in song.
So we watched—we watched together,
As the days in beauty grew,
And each sunbeam seemed reflected
In the baby eyes so blue.

And as now I watch my darling in the orchard there at play,
Surely life to me seems sweeter,
And its sacred trust completer
For the minor chords of sorrow which the spring-time took away.
And I lay a silent blessing
On the wings of each sweet breeze
As it goes to kiss the forehead
Of my blossom 'mongst the trees.

Under the hedge the June roses blow,
Red June roses—all in a row.
Under the roses a dear little face,
Where dimples and smiles leave many a trace,
"Rosebud" and roses all blooming together—
Out in the shine of the sweet June weather.

Gayly the robin his morning song sings,
Pluming and stretching his feathers and wings ;
Swiftly the bee seeks the charms of the clover
While sunshine is spreading the green meadow over.
Oh, many the beautiful things that I see !
But fairest of all things is baby to me !

Two little hands I see, twining the roses
With daisies and buttercups, nature's sweet posies.
Weaving a garland as bright as can be
For baby's mamma! 'Tis a secret, you see—
But a yellow young butterfly dancing this way
Told some one the secret of baby's, to-day.

Under the hedge where the June roses blow,
Nods the white sun-bonnet—to-and-fro.
Under the sun-bonnet laughing I see
Merry young eyes throwing glances at me,
And little plump fingers toss kisses to meet
The message I send those sweet kisses to greet.

And now, o'er the roses so fragrant, so red—
My darling bows low, and yet lower her head.
And close to the glow of her warm, dimpling face,
She crushes their beauty with sweet baby grace.
Inhaling and holding within her own heart
The perfume from theirs of which she is a part.

Oh, fragrant June roses! not sweeter are ye
Than the rosebud the Father hath given to me!
God grant she may grow 'neath the sunshine of love
Into all that is pure for the garden above.
Her dear heart be guarded from evil's sad power,
Till the bud blossoms out in the full, perfect flower.

Chasing the butterflies over the meadow,
Saw I my baby a short while ago;
In grasses as high as her head she was playing
At hide and at seek from the sunshine's warm glow
Filling her apron with sweet-scented clover,
Pausing to look at the wild honey bee,
Calling the birdies that soared far above her—
Thus has my little one wandered from me.

Butterflies, butterflies, where is your playmate?
High, nodding grasses, oh, where did she run?
Poor, wilted clovers! which way did she wander
After she dropped you to die in the sun?
Honey bee, honey bee, pause from your duties,
Pray did *you* frighten my blossom away—
Thinking to steal from her red mouth more sweetness
Than can be gathered from flowers each day?

Birdies, oh birds, that go skimming and soaring
Far overhead, did you bear my wee love
On your swift wings to the city of cloudland—
Up to the azure skies shining above?
Sunbeams and shadows spread over the meadows;
Pretty wild flowers bloom here and bloom there;
Sweet summer peace o'er the landscape is brooding:
Surely my baby is safe in their care.

Hark ! what is that which the summer breeze brings me
As I stand listening? It is the sweet voice
Which in its merriment gleefully ringing,
Makes all the mother-love in me rejoice.
Yonder I see her, my own straying lammie,
Sun-kissed, and breeze-blown; the bright tangled curls
Crowned with the blossoms and leaves she has gathered,
This queen of all blossoms, my dearest of girls!

And who tore the pretty white dress? Ah, the bushes
Are lifting their blossom-wreathed arms in delight,
And proudly exclaim, "Who could blame us for catching
And holding, for love, the wee darling so bright,
As she tripped on her way o'er the fields?" And the breezes
Come rustling and whispering, "*We* tangled her hair!"
And the sunbeams come dancing *their* mischief confessing—
"*We* browned with our kisses the soft cheek so fair."

So now in my arms do I lift the small maiden
So ragged and weary ; and bear her safe home.
For the twilight advances this way, and my baby
Adown the soft valley of dreamland must roam.
Good-by to the sunbeams, the breeze, and the bushes,
Good-by to the butterflies, birdies and bees ;
Good-by to the poor faded clovers and blossoms
Let evening her lullaby sing in the trees.

Oh, the shadows are gathering so fast, so fast!
The beautiful daytime is hiding at last,
And up in the skies
Stars of silver and gold,
Are watching all lambkins
So safe in the fold.
Comes also a message with coming of night;
A message from Slumberland: Blue eyes so bright
Grow drowsy and heavy, a wee, golden head
Half nodding—should surely be ready for bed,
And for lullaby—O!

But all so reluctant from playtime to part
My baby for Slumberland cannot yet start.
She must bid a good-night
To her treasures, each one
Ere she's willing to rest
From day's frolic and fun.
She must croon her sweet language to dolly awhile,
Her young face aglow with its dimples and smile,
As she sits like a queen midst her toys on the floor,
While the message from Slumberland cometh once more
With its lullaby—O !

Now deeper and deeper the shadows have grown;
The last sleepy bird to its snug nest has flown!
And baby looks out
At the fields, as they lie
All lonely and still
'Neath the star-lighted sky.
And sleepily murmurs a plaintive good-night
To her favorite meadows, now hidden from sight.
And wonders, perhaps, where the merry bright day,
With her playmates, the daisies, have hidden away—
With lullaby—O!

And now she has lifted her dear arms to me,
So tired, and ready for Slumberland she!
I nestle the sweet golden head on my breast,
And chant with a lullaby gently to rest
The baby whose presence makes sunshine too bright
To be hidden from *me* e'en by shadows of night.
And the dream-angel comes from the starlight to woo
The spirit of sleep to the baby-eyes blue,
By lullaby—O!

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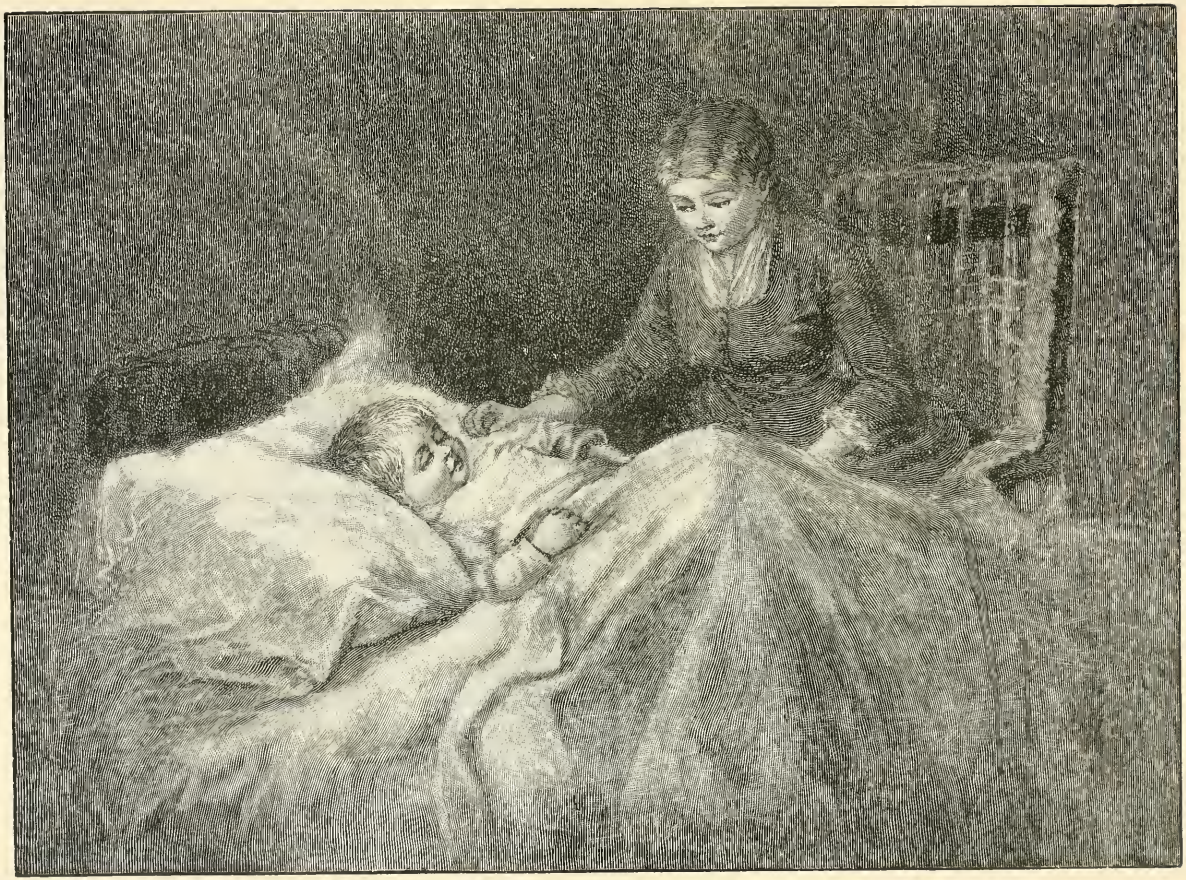

Now wandering in the land of dreams
My little one
Will heed no more her mother's care
Till night is done.
May heaven guard her thro' the night,
While shine the stars so calm, so bright!
And with the morning's gladsome light
And joyous sun—
Give back again to my fond care
My spring-time blossom—sweet and fair.

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